DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 946 AC 006 232

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TITLE Correspondence Education Through a National Newspaper.
PUB DATE 68
NOTE 29p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.55
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education, *Correspondence Courses, Course Evaluation, Course Organization, *Developing Nations, Evening Classes, *Mass Instruction, Mass Media, *National Programs, *Newspapers, Questionnaires, Teacher Role, Tutoring
IDENTIFIERS Africa, *Uganda

ABSTRACT

The Department of Extra-Mural Studies of Makerere University College, Uganda, experimented with developing correspondence courses in several subjects which were published in the weekly newspaper "The People" during 1967. Three 30-week courses (Communication, Elements of Government, and Economics) were included in a special supplement to the paper; the publishing of the supplement was financed mainly by a grant from the Milton Obote Foundation. Although problems were encountered with finding and holding tutors competent to mark the exercises, and with maintaining the interest of students for the length of the course, it was felt that the newspaper was an excellent instrument for exploitation in formal adult education programs, and that more courses should be initiated through the newspapers. Resident tutors assigned to specific areas of the country attempted to arrange evening classes and lectures in conjunction with or supplementary to the correspondence course; where this was possible, the face-to-face teaching experience was found to be very valuable. Results of a questionnaire completed by students indicated generally positive impressions of the program. (mf)

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CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION THROUGH A NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

AN EXPERIMENT

IN UGANDA

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CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION THROUGH A NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

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This paper is in three parts. The first is a report and description of the three courses that were published in the Correspondence Education Supplement of 'The People' in Uganda from May to December 1967; the second summarises the information and comments taken from the questionnaires that were returned by students; and the third presents some more personal reflections and comment on the actual and potential role of the Press in education.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who helped to make this experiment the success we believe it to have been. In particular I should like to thank Daniel Nelson, Editor of 'The People', and other members of the editorial staff, whose friendship and patience throughout the year did so much to make the partnership work; also the Governors of the Milton Obote Foundation for their generous grant, without which the publication of the Supplement would not have been possible; the students who took part in the course and sent in their comments and suggestions in the questionnaire; and all the tutorial and secretarial staff in the former Department of Extra-Mural Studies (now part of the Centre for Continuing Education), whose enthusiasm and energy contributed so much to the success of this project.

Makerere

June 1968

PART I: REPORT

From May to December 1967 the Uganda weekly newspaper "The People" published a four-page Correspondence Education Supplement containing three thirty-week courses in **Communication, Elements of Government,** and **Economics;** these were written and administered by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of Makerere University College, Uganda, and the extra cost of publishing the supplement was largely covered by a grant of £1000 from the Milton Obote Foundation.

Background

The scheme resulted from a happy coincidence of purpose between the newspaper and the department.

For some years the Extra-Mural Department had been expanding its programme of study courses, mainly in the towns and larger rural centres of Uganda, and through a number of short residential courses, mainly held at Makerere. It was becoming increasingly obvious, however, that Department was only reaching a small proportion of that section of the adult population that could benefit from University Extra-Mural studies; this was partly due to the fact that many people lived too far from the centres where classes were held, or could not attend at that time of the evening, and partly to lack of publicity and understanding of what the Department could offer.

It was also becoming clear that the majority of evening classes did not offer suitable conditions for sustained learning, and that they were therefore comparatively ineffectual as means of education.

Courses through the Mass Media

Thus the Department began to look more and more to the possibilities of the mass media. By using radio, television and correspondence study many more people could be reached, and correspondence study in particular, linked wherever possible with residential courses and other opportunities for face-to-face contact, would provide better conditions for learning. At the same time the use of the public media of radio and television would advertise the work of the Department more widely. At that time, however, there was no serious thought of using the Press as a medium for regular educational courses.

In 1965 the Department presented a series of 10 programmes on Uganda Television which were linked to a correspondence course on "Good Letter Writing".†

† Report in CETO NEWS No. 9. Dec. 1965. (Centre for Educational Television Overseas, London)

The experiment was not very successful, however, mainly because few of the people for whom the course was mainly intended were able to watch television in suitable conditions.

At the end of 1965 Mr. Paul Theroux was oppointed as the first Staff Tutor for Radio and Television and during the early months of 1966 two further attempts were made to broadcast a series of educational programmes linked with correspondence study: one by radio and one by television. These were again unsuccessful, mainly because they were seriously affected by the political disturbances which took place around the middle of the year. Later in the year a start was made on developing a number of radio-listening groups, but no further attempt was made to link radio or T.V. programmes with a correspondence course.

Intermediate Certificate

About this time the introduction of a new Certificate was approved. For the previous two years the Department had been running an intensive one-year residential course leading to a **Certificate of Adult Studies** at approximately Higher School Certificate standard. Attempts had also been made to allow Extra-Mural students to take the course through evening classes in Kampala and various up-country centres, but these were unsuccessful, chiefly because not enough people were ready to take subjects at that level through evening classes. It was clear that another kind of certificate was needed to suit the needs of the majority of people in Extra-Mural classes, and also a great many potential students who were so far unacquainted with University Extra-Mural Studies.

Thus the **Intermediate Certificate** was formulated, generally equivalent to the G.C.E. "O" level in standard, and designed specifically to meet the needs of adults in Uganda who found courses for School Certificate or G.C.E. unsuitable or insufficent for their needs as working adults in independent Uganda. It was intended that people should be able to study subjects for the Certificate either through evening classes or through correspondence courses combined with some opportunities for face-to face teaching and supplemented wherever possible by radio and T.V. programmes.

The evening class structure was already established, but means of correspondence education were non-existent; with the severe shortage of staff and lack of anyone with professional experience, it seemed as though the introduction of correspondence courses for the new Certificate would have to be postponed for a considerable time.

In October of that year a one-day 'symposium' on "The Press in Africa" was organised by the Department at Makerere. Editors of the leading local newspapers and others discussed questions about the vitality of the Press in contemporary African society. One result of this symposium was an increased interest in the work and potential of the Extra-Mural Department by the national weekly English language newspaper "The People".

† Paul Theroux, ed., "The Press in Africa; Is it Dying?" Makerere Conference Report, Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies, 1967

Further discussions in December between the Editor of "The People", Mr. Daniel Nelson, and the Acting Director of the Extra-Mural Department, Mr. Ronald Clarke, revealed the possibilities of mutual interest beyond publicising the Department's activities and stimulating interest in adult education; Mr. Nelson was anxious that the newspaper should play a more direct part in spreading education, and it soon became clear that this could well be the outlet which the Department needed to launch its new courses on a scale which had been impossible until then.

The pilot course: "Good Letter-Writing".

As the editor wanted to make a start as soon as possible it was decided that the text of the "Good Letter Writing" course which had originally been produced in conjunction with television programmes should be reprinted as a ten-week course in the main body of the newspaper; at the same time preparations were started for the launching of three thirty-week courses for the Intermediate Certificate in a special supplement, which would begin when the pilot course had ended.

The letter-writing course was advertised in the newspaper and people were invited to enrol for the correspondence work. No fees were charged. 123 people responded and began the course, which involved sending in short written exercises every week. Of this number, 67 were considered to have completed the course by sending in eight or more exercises for correction. A small certificate was issued to each of these people who completed the course.

One problem with the printing of this course was that, being printed in the main body of the paper, it had to compete for space with other copy; thus although on no occasion was it necessary to cut out any of the course material, the arrangement was not always as good as educators would like to see (this problem is considered in more detail in part 3 of this report).

In comparison with the television course, however, it was found that study through the newspaper was generally more successful. More people completed the course, and the results of the written work suggested that people generally learnt more through this means. There was also a wider range of occupation reflected in the enrolments for this course compared with enrolments for our normal courses.

In the meantime preparations were continued for the launching of the main courses in a special supplement. The three subjects would be the basic background subjects taught by the department: Communication (The Use of English); Government; Economics.

The financing of the project, which had been a major worry, was largely taken care of by a generous grant of £1000 from the Milton Obote Foundation. With revenue from advertisements and increased circulation it was estimated that this would be enough to cover the cost of printing a 4 page supplement for 30 weeks.

The writing of the three courses was undertaken by members of the Department's staff who had experience in teaching these subjects. The "Communication" course was written by Mr. Clarke, the "Government" course by Mr. Wyn Williams, Resident Tutor, who wrote almost the entire course from a bed in Mulago Hospital, and the "Economics" course by Mr. Jassy Kwesiga, Staff Tutor, until he left for a study course in Britain, when a part-time tutor, Mr. Alex Goodall, took over and completed the writing of the course. None of these people had any previous experience of writing a correspondence course and they had to rely on what they could learn from a couple of small books on correspondence education. Editing of the written courses was done by Mr. Clarke and Mr. Stephen Brazier, who also directed the project during Mr. Clarke's absence abroad.

Towards the end of the "Good Letter Writing" course advertisements were put in the paper for both students and markers for the main courses. Regional Resident Tutors were also asked to advertise the courses in their areas. Intending students were invited to write in for enrolment forms and people interested in becoming markers (or correspondence tutors as they were called) were invited to contact the Department if they had qualifications in any of the three subjects offered.

Enrolment

Over a thousand people responded to the advertisements and were sent enrolment forms. About 900 of these forms were returned, and from these a total of 565 enrolments were accepted. In general people were accepted who had either already completed some G.C.E. 'O' level subjects or who had completed 10 — 12 years of education and were therefore likely to be near 'O' level in standard (for example, a large number of applicants were primary teachers who had completed eight years school education plus four years teacher training, which was equivalent in time to a full secondary course). Applicants who had only completed 8 — 9 years of formal education (i.e. the old Junior Secondary) had to show that they had improved their educational standard in some way before they were accepted.

Fees

Accepted students were asked to send in their course fees with their enrolment forms. Fees of Shs. 25/- per course were charged or Shs. 60/- for all three courses. This covered the costs of marking and returning ten exercises per subject. Printing and distribution costs were of course taken care of by the newspaper, and this considerably reduced the cost to the student.

In the end it was found that the Department made a slight over-all profit from fees received, at least when these were balanced against direct expenditure on the course; some of the incidental costs of

arranging regional week-end meetings for corresponding students were carried on the regional budgets. Marking fees paid to correspondence tutors began at Shs. 1/- per script, and this was the figure used in assessing the amount of fees to be paid; this was later raised to Shs 1/50 per script, but the extra expenditure here was balanced by the drop-off in students sending in exercises.

Tutors

About 20 people responded to the advertisements for script-markers. Some of these had already been part-time tutors for the Department's evening classes; others were entirely new to the work.

In the end it was necessary to accept almost everyone who applied as long as they had reasonable qualifications in the subject they were concerned with (at least part of their degree). It was less difficult to get markers for Communication and Government, since these subjects were generally familiar to teachers of English and Civics; for Economics, however, it was extremely difficult to find suitable markers, since this is not a normal teaching subject.

Correspondence schedule

The courses were designed to extend over 30 weeks, or units. This was equivalent to a normal year of three 10-week terms in evening classes.

In each subject-course there were 10 correspondence exercises, which were presented every third week. These were staggered so that students taking all three courses were supposed to do a correspondence exercise each week in each of the three subjects in turn. Thus from the first issue of the Supplement students wrote correspondence exercises in Communication, from the second in Government, from the third in Economics, from the fourth in Communication again, and so on. Each week self-marking exercises were given in the two subjects which did not present a correspondence exercise. Answers to these self-marking exercises were normally printed upside-down at the end of the supplement.

Students were asked to write and send in their correspondence exercises as soon as possible after collecting the paper each week. Thus it was hoped that the great majority of scripts would be received by the following Saturday, when tutors were asked to come and collect them. If these were returned by the following Saturday and posted back immediately most students would receive their marked scripts within about a fortnight of sending them in.

In fact this schedule did not work out as well as expected, for various reasons considered later in this section.

Starting the courses

It was originally intended that the courses should begin in April, about a month after the "Good Letter Writing" course ended. This (it was supposed) would give enough time to process enrolments, and also to complete the course by the end of November, with a short break somewhere in the middle. It was important that the courses should end early in December so that the final tests could be arranged before the end of the third term.

As it happened, the starting of the courses was postponed, partly because of delays in getting scripts ready and applications processed, and partly because of delays in arranging for the printing of the supplement; thus the first supplement appeared on 24th May which was almost the last possible week to complete 30 supplements by the beginning of December, without allowing for any break in publication.

Each supplement consisted of four pages (tabloid size), with the three subjects beginning separately on each of the first three pages; remaining subject-matter was fitted onto the last page together with commercial advertisements. Illustrations and instructions to students were fitted into the general lay-out of the supplement. The average length of each subject-unit was 1500 words, although this varied considerably from week to week and from subject to subject. The Supplement was printed on a variety of coloured papers, finally settling down to blue in the latter part of the course. It became popularly known as the "Colour Supplement".

Supporting activities

Corresponding students were divided into six geographical areas according to the Extra-Mural regions of the country. Each of these regions is looked after by a Resident Tutor, whose normal job is to arrange a programme of evening classes and lectures in his region. During these courses the Resident Tutors were asked to arrange opportunities for face-to face teaching for the corresponding students in their areas, particularly for those who were unable to attend evening classes.

These meetings were normally arranged at weekends (particularly on Saturday afternoons) in District towns and other centres where there were a reasonable number of students. They were conducted either by the Resident Tutor, or local part-time or visiting tutors from Makerere. The course-writers and some of the correspondence tutors made several visits round the country to attend these weekend meetings. Some of the time at the meetings was taken up with supplementary talks and exercises on the subject-matter of the course; most of the time, however, (especially in "Government' and 'Economics') was taken up with answering questions and explaining difficult parts of

the courses, and this was probably the most valuable part of the face-to-face meetings.

One or two Resident Tutors also managed to arrange one-week residential courses in their region (usually in a boarding school during holidays), and a one-week course was held at Makerere for 150 of the students during the week immediately preceding the final tests in December.

A series of radio programmes was also presented during the last two months of the course; in these the course writers discussed some of the main problems that students had experienced in studying their subject.

Testing and results

The courses were fitted into the framework of the new Intermediate Certificate, which requires at least two tests in each subject, taken at intervals during the course. As other students were taking similar courses for the Certificate through evening classes which had begun earlier in the year, it was difficult to arrange suitable occasions for the tests. In the end the first tests were held on the 16th September, and the second tests on 16th December, the day on which the final issue of the supplement appeared. This arrangement was more suitable for the correspondence students than for the evening class students, but was the only possible arrangement in the circumstances.

About 440 people sat both sets of tests, and out of these 307 Intermediate Certificates were awarded in one or more subjects. Results in each subject were calculated from the aggregate of marks in the two tests.

EVALUATION : Some lessons learnt.

Reaction to the whole project, from students, from those professionally concerned, and from the public at large, was generally very favourable. It was considered to be well worth all the time, energy and expense involved.

A number of problems and difficulties which developed during the course are worth noting here, however, for their relevance to the planning of future courses.

Course-Writing

The course writers and editors would be the first to admit that the quality of the scripts, as correspondence study material, often left much to be desired. Being entirely amateurs in this matter, without any personal professional guidance, they had to learn their job as they went along.

The quality of writing was probably also affected by the pressure to get scripts completed in time for publication. Although the original intention was that scripts would be prepared well in advance to allow ample time for revision, in fact it became normal for scripts to be hurriedly edited and typed and rushed to the newspaper office to beat the deadline for each week's issue. One of the difficulties here was that the script writers and editors were also carrying out full-time responsibilities as tutors and administrators and could only write in their spare time. On the other hand, if the medium of the Press had not been used, with its regular deadline for copy, the courses might not have got written at all.

Students

It is generally agreed that free-pacing is best in correspondence study, so that the student can work at his own speed. These courses, however, were inevitably tied to a strict schedule.

We hoped that students would get into the habit of writing and sending in written exercises at the same time each week, as soon as they had an opportunity after getting the paper. Unfortunately only a minority of students developed this habit, and many fell far behind in sending their exercises. This was no doubt a cause of many of the drop-outs, since it was very difficult for a student to catch up with the schedule once he had fallen three or four weeks behind, especially if he were taking all three subjects.

Thus the inevitable regularity of the course must be considered one of the drawbacks in using the Press as a medium for correspondence study. It may be also that we demanded too much written work of the students over too short a period. If less had been demanded, more students might have kept to the schedule. Even so, it should be possible for a serious student to complete one set of exercises per week.

Tutors

Several of the part-time tutors who were employed proved to be quite unsatisfactory. Many students sent back exercises which had been given some vague marks and nothing more. Where comments and corrections had been written these were often unhelpful or difficult to read.

With the shortage of staff in the Department it was impossible to do as much checking as was needed, and it was not easy to find new tutors. In the end most of the marking was being done by two or three tutors in each subject, as others had dropped out for various reasons. Fortunately these remaining tutors were generally the most conscientious and careful in their marking. At one stage in Govern-

ment and Economics we were relying almost entirely on one of the course writers and two second-year undergraduates on vacation.

The future

Clearly the supplement reached and appealed to a much larger number of people than those in our comparatively small group of corresponding students. Probably several thousands read the supplement carefully each week, while thousands more glanced through it or read it from time to time. The circulation of the paper rose from around 12,000 to around 18,000 by the end of the course (although this rise was attributed more to the publication of the ex-Kabaka of Buganda's memoirs) and this circulation would suggest that between 50,000 and 100,000 people were aware of the supplement and read it at least occasionally. Almost everyone that one spoke to knew about it, and had some comment to offer.

When the course finished there was strong demand from a wide cross-section of the population that a new supplement should be published, and the Milton Obote Foundation was very willing to sponsor the continuation of this new supplement which re-appeared in March 1968. This time the publication of the courses (in E.A. History, Law and First Aid) is organised by the Adult Education Centre of the Milton Obote Foundaton, and is not specifically tied to any correspondence courses, although the first two courses may form the basis of new Intermediate Certificate subjects.

Meanwhile the new Centre for Continuing Education at Makerere (which has taken in the old Extra-Mural Department) is developing a Correspondence Courses Division under the direction of the an experienced correspondence educator seconded by the New Zealand Government, Mr. Albert Kaye. The three courses published through the newspaper have been revised and are being re-issued as more "normal" correspondence course units to students individually. Other courses will be added as this division of the Centre develops.

Thus the correspondence study has been separated from the newspaper supplement, at least temporarily. This is partly because the Centre was unable, with its present shortage of staff, to undertake the writing and administration of correspondence courses in three new subjects, and also because the Editor and the Milton Obote Foundation Centre were keen to introduce subjects of more general or practical interest which might not be so suitable at present for correspondence study.

It is probable, however, that future courses in the Educational Supplement will be tied very closely to correspondence courses, even if the actual instructions and administrative details of the course are communicated directly to the students instead of being printed in the Supplement.

PART II: THE STUDENTS

At the end of the courses a questionnaire was sent or given to all those who had been following the newspaper course either as corresponding or evening class students. A note was also put in the last issue inviting casual readers to complete the questionnaire.

A total of 312 replies was received, and the following is a summary of the responses. Our chief aim in these questions was to find out general reactions to the course and the difficulties that students experienced, to help us in planning future courses.

Present Occupation

As we expected, there was a wider range of occupation than in our traditional evening classes, although teachers again formed by far the largest group, with a total of 147. Unfortunately, in spite of being asked to do so, most of the teachers did not specify their grade, but from the number of those who did it seems that about three-quarters were Grade II (Jun. Sec. + 3 or 4 years T.T.C.) and the remainder Grade III (School Cert. + 2 years T.T.C.)

Clerks formed the second largest group (40); most of these were in Central or Local Government, but a few were with commercial firms. Other occupations represented were: Prison Officers (12), Medical and Nursing Assistants (12), Health Assistants (5), Agricultural Assistants (5), Telephonists (5), Shop Assistants (5), Police Constables (4), Community Development Assistants (4), Youth Assistants (4). Some of the various other occupations with one or two each were : pastors, journalists, magistrates, traders, company managers and personnel officers. Nine of the students were unemployed. Only twenty of the students were women, and all but one of these were teachers.

Thus it seems that in spite of a greater variety of occupations represented by one or two people each, the bulk of the demand for this kind of course still comes from teachers, from clerks, and from government assistants.

Formal Education (school)

Almost all the students had between 8 and 12 years of education, 8 years being (under the old system) Jun. Sec. 2, or normal entrance level to Sen. Sec. 1 and 12 years being Sen. Sec. 4, or School Certficate level. The large number at 9 years were mainly pupils who completed J.S. 3 and then went on to 3 or 4 years T.T.C. for training as Primary Teachers (grade II) It can be seen that a high proportion of people taking these courses are "Secondary drop-outs" in one way or another, i.e. people who failed to complete Senior Secondary or who failed to get a School Certificate (although about two-thirds of

those in the largest group, completing S.S. 4., had either School Certificate or some G.C.E. subjects). Thus as far as official educational level is concerned we were generally getting the people we aimed at: — those who needed to study for a certificate near the level of G.C.E. 'O' level. It was interesting to note, however that the leved of formal education did not relate very closely to the final results for the Certificate. Several of those who had School Certificate or G.C.E. did poorly in the tests, while several of those who had only 8 or 9 years formal education did well.

How have you been studying?

223 of the people replying had been studying through correspondence, and 116 through evening classes. 23 had been reading the supplement "for general interest". 2 gave no answer. Since this total is 52 above the number of questionnaires returned, we can assume that this number were studying both through correspondence and evening classes; presumably those who were studying through evening classes were also reading the supplement regularly.

Before the courses began, how often did you read "The People"?

"Every week" 143; "most weeks" 44; "sometimes" 82; "very seldom" 21; "never" 21. If we assume that the first two categories can be considered regular readers, these represent about three-fifths of the total. Thus only a few new readers were introduced to the paper through these courses, and these were mainly the people in rural areas who were canvassed through Resident Tutors and received their copies by post.

Do you buy your own copy of the paper?

Almost everyone (287) bought his own copy; only 8 borrowed or read in libraries (No answer 17).

How do you get your copy?

A large majority of students (227) got their copy "from a local seller", i.e. from a shop or street seller. 29 got their copy directly by post, and 37 from Resident Tutors (N.A. 12)

When?

Well over half (175) managed to get their copy on the publication day, Saturday. The others were : 7 on Sunday, 37 on Monday, 10 on Tuesday, 21 on Wednesday, 15 on Thursday and 9 on Friday (N.A. 34). Most of those who got their copy during the second half

of the following week were (as might be expected) people living in the most distant parts of the country who either got their copy by post from Resident Tutors or by local bus.

Do you find difficulty in getting it?

This was not a very useful question, as the difficulties were not specified. 164 answered "yes", 134 "no" and 14 "sometimes" (N.A. 4.)

Have you managed to keep all copies of the supplement?

At the beginning of the course students were issued with file covers and asked to keep all their copies in this file. 221 stated that they had managed to do this; 54 that they had missed some; 33 admitted that they had not kept them (N.A. 4)

What else do you enjoy reading in "The People"?

This question was asked mainly to discover what kind of article appealed most to this kind of reader. By far the most popular feature was "Face to Face" a regular question-and-answer interview with a prominent local personality (105). Others in order of popularity were: Letters to tht Editor (52), political news (43), current affairs articles (40), current issues (25). Talking Point — opinion (23), The Week — brief general news (39) sports news (36), View-point — brief comment on reviews of news (18), Woman's Page (16) Commentary (16), Book serials (15), The Press — current press affairs (11) the editorial (10), advertisements (9). Only two people mentioned commentary on radio and television programmes, which are prominent weekly features. It is also strange that only 15 people mentioned book serials, when a dramatic rise in circulation around the middle of the year was clearly attributable to the serial publication of the ex-Kabaka of Buganda's memoirs.

How did you find the Supplement (compared with a text-book)?

This question was badly worded, and was often confused with the next one. The majority stated that they found it easy to follow (188); 53 were positive about finding it difficult to follow compared with a text book. Useful comments were: supplementary text-books were needed for reference (43); too many unexplained technical words, especially in Economics (27); booklets would be easier to handle and keep than a newspaper (25).

Did you find the language in any parts of the course too difficult to follow?

No (150); Yes (73). Many people repeated comments for the previous question, especially about unexplained technical words; 45 mentioned Economics as being particularly difficult.

Did you find that you were able to learn much from your correspondence work ?

Yes (237); No (12); N.A. (63). The response here is perhaps surprising in view of the fact that so many exercises were inadequately marked, and the comments on this in the last question. Perhaps many of those who gave no answer were unwilling to state bluntly that they had not learnt much. It is also possible that many people felt they had learnt through the very fact of writing the exrcises, apart from the quality of the comments on their returned work.

Did you listen to any of the radio programmes which supported the courses ?

Yes (190); No (89); N.A. (29)

If so, did you find them helpful ?

Yes (186); No (4). Among other comments added here the most common were : the programmes were not clear (reception) (41); the times were unsuitable (21); the time (15 mins) was too short (12).

Did you attend any week-end meetings or residential courses arranged for people following the courses ?

Yes (211); No. (67); N.A. (23)

If so, were they helpful ?

Yes (205); No (6).

Which have you most enjoyed of the courses that have been printed in the supplement ?

Government (80); Economics (63); Communication (44); N.A. (125). Several mentioned that they enjoyed all the courses equally.

If a new supplement is published next year, what subjects would you like to see included ?

A number of possible subjects were suggested here, particularly those that had been considered for the Makerere Intermediate Certificate.

Sociology (222); East African History (212); Health Science (188); Book-keeping (184); Agricultural Economics (171); Economic Geography (171); French (133); Swahili (132); Art Appreciation (63). The last subject was put in mainly to see what interest there would be in a subject with little obvious practical application; in fact the response was remarkably high.

Subjects outside the list which were mentioned by a few people each were : Law; Home Economics; Maths; Commerce; Public Administration; Religious Knowledge.

If the Makerere Intermediate Certificate were to be recognised as equivalent, would you prefer to study subjects for this certificate or for School Certificate (G.C.E. 'O' level) examinations as a private candidate ?

Makerere Intermediate Certificate (252); School Certificate or G.C.E. (43); N.A. (17)

Further comments, criticisms and suggestions.

Students were invited to make extra comments here, or to expand on answers they had given to previous questions. The most common replies have been roughly grouped as follows :

Government should be persuaded to recognise the Certificate (58);

Students who pass subjects for this certficate should be automatically accepted for higher studies (26);

Week-end seminars should be increased to allow students more opportunities for face-to-face contact with tutors (56),

Residential courses should be increased and extended to up-country areas to cater for a larger number than those who can get to Makerere (42);

Resident Tutors should keep in regular contact with corresponding students in their areas to give them more help (35);

Each district should have a Resident Tutor (21);

Comments on returned exercises are not easy to follow; and some markers hardly make any comments (general complaints about marking) (57);

Students should be given model answers (48);

More books for supplementary reading should be recommended (33);

Exercises posted back to students take too long to reach them (43)

Language used in the courses should be further simplified, especially in Economics and Government (28).

PART III : REFLECTIONS

Education and the Press

It is remarkable how rarely education is mentioned specifically as one of the functions of the Press.

Books about the Press, and about its role in society, either do not mention the word at all, or merely imply it within other terms, or speak briefly and vaguely of some 'educative' purpose. Thus in "Four Theories of the Press", by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, a book that is specifically concerned with function and principles, the word 'education' is avoided; even in the sction on the modern 'Social Responsibility' theory, where one might perhaps expect some mention of education, there is nothing more than an implication in the first two of a list of functions based on this theory : "(1) servicing the political system by providing information, discussion and debate on public affairs; (2) enlighten the public to make it capable of self-government". [1]

Perhaps this lack is not so surprising in books on the Press in the highly developed societies, where means of education are open to almost everyone; in Africa and the other 'under-developed' parts of the world, however, where means are constantly being sought to expand the inadequate systems of education, one might have more expectations that the Press would be seen as a useful medium for extending the scope of education. Yet here again mention is rare. Frank Barton's little book "The Press in Africa" avoids the word entirely. Admittedly this is intended as a practical introduction to the profession for young journalists and does not go deeply into theory.

One might then expect something specific in the much more substantial book by Rosalynde Ainslie, also with the title "The Press in Africa". Here the writer is more concerned with theories and principles and function in a particular society, and she is also concerned with the wider implications of "The Press" and mass media, as the sub-title "Communications Past and Present" suggests. In this book we certainly find education mentioned, but only once or twice in relation to newspapers, as though it slipped in almost by accident; all the other references are to radio or television. A paragraph in the opening chapter is interesting. The writer is mentioning the role of the Press is social change and education : "Whether the change to be introduced is a new farming implement, a new food, or a new industrial skill, **radio, newspapers and television** can take over the discussion and explanation that must precede the change, and even the demonstration that accompanies it. In the field of more formal education, be it adult literacy, schooling or higher education, **radio and television** can make the work of a single teacher available all over the country, to

supplement the efforts of teachers or monitors on the spot" (my emphasis).[2] Implicit in this is the assumpion that while newspapers can be used to help activate change, for 'animation' they must be dropped when it comes to thinking about a more direct educational course.

Yet the question is there : if radio and television, why not newspapers ? Newspapers are accepted as one of the mass media, and one of the most effective. Everyone talks about the other mass media of radio and television being used for education. Why not newspapers ?

It is not only journalists that avoid mentioning or thinking about this. Educationalists and mass communications experts also seem to ignore the potentials of the Press. Wilbur Schramm (to take a leading example) lists four generations of educational media in his "Mass Media and National Development", from the earliest, original media of diagrams, demonstrations, etc., to the most modern electronic devices. His "second generation" media are **printed** media; yet he makes no mention of newspapers among the various kinds of publication that can be used for education. [3]

Thus it seems that education should not be openly considered as one of the functions of the Press; and educators should not take newspapers into account when considering the best media for their work. There is an implied or an assumed division of purpose that, for one reason or another, must needs be perpetuated.

Perhaps we should try to make some distinction here between an **educative** and an **educational** purpose; although these words are often used indiscriminately, with no significant difference in meaning, they are also used to distinguish different purposes and different kinds of material, particularly in radio and television programmes. From what we have already considered, and from common expressions of opinion, we may assume I think that responsible journalists (and I am not concerned here with the pulp press) would generally agree that the Press has an educative function, even if they avoid using the word. When one speaks of 'educative' programmes on radio and television one thinks of documentaries, discussions, quizzes, etc. Obviously there is no clear line to be drawn between entertainment and education. Information and enlightenment — mentioned as functions with the 'social responsibility' theory of the Press — are clearly part of an educative process. Apart from news and comment all good quality newspapers carry features and articles which must be included in this same category. What we are more concerned with here, however, is the kind of material that would be termed 'educational', in other words writing with a specific rather than a general educational purpose directed at a particular section of the population, however wide that section may be.

As we have seen, however much writers on the Press may implicitly accept this kind of educative function, they generally tend to avoid mentioning the term and there is virtually no mention at all of any specific educational purpose. Can we assume then that journalists are generally hostile to the idea of specific education through the Press?

Since it is so rare to find any substantial statement on the attitude of pressmen to education, it is hard to find an answer.* At a conference which we held in Makerere on "Adult Education and the Means of Mass Communication" 4, hovever, we specifically included newspapers and asked a leading journalist, Mr. Tom Hopkinson, to address the conference on this topic. I am quoting at some length from his talk, partly because of the rarity of such a statement, and partly because Mr. Hopkinson is a journalist of international repute with wide experience in Africa and as an educator of journalists.

In his talk he suggested five ways in which the Press and educators can co-operate or rather (perhaps the difference is important) five ways in which the Press can help education. Very briefly summarised these are as follows :

1. It can **publicize** educational activities;
2. It can **report** what has taken place, such as speeches at conferences, **where the report has news value;**
3. It can give general background information especially in current affairs and the Arts;
4. It can encourage impartial attitudes to events by setting an example of objectivity;
5. It can give general knowledge to more specific groups of people, such as domestic matters on the women's page.

Implicit in all of these is the idea of **professional service**, to one branch of the public served by the Press; in the second category he mentioned that the Press will make these reports as part of their normal duties, — **if they have news value** — and not as a special favour, which suggests that the element of favour is often there when space is being given to educational matters.

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* I have recently come across the following words by the eminent biologist, the late Prof. J.B.S. Haldane, in the introduction to a book of popular scientific essays originally published about thirty years ago in the 'Daily Worker', at that time the official newspaper of the British Communist Party: 'In the nineteenth century distinguished men of science wrote regularly in the daily press... This has ceased to be the case because the readers of most newspapers are not interested in such matters, or so at least their editors say. Some sixteen years ago a colleague and I offered to do a free scientific news service for the Daily Herald. The offer was turned down. Personally I do not think the rank and file of the Labour Movement are as stupid as the editorial board of that Journal appeared to believe. Fortunately, however, the Daily Worker has now given me the opportunity to write them an article which appears every Thursday...' from the Preface to "Science in Everyday Life".

These five categories are all very general, with the possible exception of the fifth. In none of them is there any suggestion of doing more than support specific educational schemes or encourage favourable attitudes. His own attitude to this question of what the Press can or should do becomes more positive in the following[5] :

"The general press can do an enormous lot to help schemes of education, and of extending education, but in general they will only do what they want to do and what is subject to their conception of their role as a newspaper. Now this of course is perfectly legitimate because the spreading of news and the conduct of a newspaper is fully as important — or at least of parallel importance to the work of educationists — and just as no newspaper could expect you to alter your plans or programmes for the sake of bringing them more in line with what would be convenient or advantageous to newspapers, similarly it would not be reasonable to expect newspapers to alter what they consider to be their service to the public for the sake of serving educational needs, except in so far as it is possible for the two to run together. It is perhaps hard for you if you haven't worked in a newspaper office or radio to realise what tremendous pressure there is — growing pressure — on the space of newspapers and the time of radio. The casual reader who looks through a newspaper is apt to think this could have been left out, and why do they have strip cartoons? and what's the good of a woman's page? and so on, dismissing the various interests that he hasn't got, and thinking the space might have been used to serve the interests that he has. But a newspaper of course is a very delicately balanced formula worked out very closely to try and secure maximum interest for the maximum number of people and to try and combine the service that all papers try to do in informing accurately with that proportion of entertainment which will ensure that people buy, and continue to buy, the paper. What I am saying is that there is a tremendous pressure on space and that every newspaper man who's at all concerned with more than his immediate task is well aware that each day's issue of a paper could be filled three times over with the material that comes into the office, and that the task of editing is a ceaseless process of rejection and cutting down; anything therefore that is going to make its way into the pages of a paper has got to go through very stringent tests of interest, readability and so on before it will get by . . . "

Later in his talk Mr. Hopkinson re-emphasised these points about pressure on space, and makes his position clear on the question of putting direct educational courses in a newspaper :

" . . . I think it would be a mistake, for instance, to expect the general Press to do anything like running an educational campaign to, for example, let us say, teach people French, or to try to extend their knowledge of English. In general of course one would hope

they extend their knowledge of English simply by reading the paper, but I don't think one can expect a paper to run anything like, or to take part in running anything like, a regular educational campaign. For one thing the editor of a paper never really knows until he goes to press what space he's got available; supposing there's a revolution in Zanzibar tomorrow — he may be obliged to chuck out everything he's prepared and to leave out, shall we say, lesson No. 4 in a series of six lessons — so one cannot I think expect him to guarantee in advance to take part in anything like an educational campaign, or series of articles. What he would be much more likely to do would be, with your help, to work out a feature article on what you were doing and what it was all about, and after the campaign was over, to interview some people who have either benefited from it or been disgruntled by it and give their opinions. In this way he can help to call attention to your work and of course he particularly likes to call attention to success stories because on the whole readers prefer to read of success rather than failure, and of triumph rather than suicide; so that if at any time in such a campaign you achieve a notable success, or above all an individual benefits from the campaign, in such a way as to improve his position in life or get himself a better job or become able to take on work of his own or make a difference to his village or his community, — all these individual stories are things which in general a paper will be very happy to take and give credit and publicity to, but it cannot I think run an educational campaign, run a series of lessons, or instructions, or allow space to be set aside for an outside personal body; — because papers will almost never say 'yes we'll give you six inches on page three to do what you like with' — they don't even know that they will have it."

It is very difficult for an educator to attempt to argue against this. It is clearly a sincere statement of belief by an experienced journalist who is dedicated to his profession, and who is also highly sympathetic to the work of educators. The emphasis throughout is professional, and the educator who expects his own profession to be respected must also respect the feelings and limitations of this other profession. One does not need to be especially sensitive to appreciate the kind of situation in which editors have unreasonable demands made on them, and are expected to include unsuitable material by those who want to use the Press for their own particular ends. Obviouly some educators have at times been guilty of this.

In the discussions that followed Mr. Hopkinson's talk, delegates to the conference (who were nearly all teachers in one way or another) were generally unwilling to question the main assumptions in his argument; they were more interested in discussing how suitable feature articles could be written and in concluding that Letters to the Editor were an excellent medium for conducting an educational dialogue.

Yet, impressive as Mr. Hopkinson's statement is, it still leaves an uneasy feeling that some questions have been left unanswered, and that some of his basic assumptions should not go unchallenged. When this conference was held in 1964 there was no available evidence with which to challenge these assumptions; now, four years later, we have our own experimental project behind us, and there have been at least two other instances in Africa of the direct presentation of educational material through newspapers.

The main theoretical tenet in Mr. Hopkinson's argument, as I understand it, is that there is a fundamental difference between the business of the educator and the business of the journalist, between educating and informing. But is this a valid distinction? Within the same range of subject matter, is there any very great difference between what the educator does in his lecture, his text book, or his correspondence course, and what the journalist does between his reporting of events and his comment and feature articles? Maybe there is some difference in style and approach, but so there is between the various media used by the teacher: the lecture, the text book, the correspondence course. Surely both the teacher and the journalist are presenting information and facts, and interpreting them for the understanding of their readers.

The main practical matter in the argument seems to be that newspapers are under tremendous and continuous pressure and that they therefore cannot guarantee space at any particular time for a particular section of the community. Granted that news is unpredictable, and that the lay-out of a paper is a matter of last minute decision, it is hardly true that **no** space can be guaranteed in a paper. There are certain things that always appear, whatever sudden and overwhelming calamity may be unleashed on the world. Even if we discount the commercial advertisements, on which the paper's existence may depend, there are still many features that appear regularly, however much the daily news may fluctuate. In one paper I know, nothing has yet happened to shake the strip cartoons off the back page. It seems to boil down to a matter of principle or priorities, of what the paper's function is considered to be. If education were regarded as one of the essential functions of the newspaper, regular space would be found, as it is for the Woman's Page and other regular features.

In writing this I am very conscious of being on the other side of the fence, of being an educator with only the most amateurish experience of journalism. At the 1964 conference we educators were overawed by the apparent solidarity of the journalistic profession behind Tom Hopkinson's argument. Now four years later, we have, as I mentioned earlier, at least three examples where newspaper men have demonstrated a different view of the functions of the Press. Apart from our own, there have been projects in Algeria and Kenya (both

of which, incidentally, were unknown to us when our own project was conceived).

In Algeria in 1965 Chabane Bellahsene was faced with the task of providing correspondence courses for thousands of young students who could not attend school, with only minimal funds and equipment. His main problems were printing and distribution. So (in his own words): "We simply asked the Algerian press to help us in the distribution of our courses. The editors were extremely favourable and helped us in every way. Thus all Algerian papers devoted one whole page to the program. The element of competition played a certain part. The great Algerian paper of the west of the country suggested that it should publish, for our benefit, a special issue devoted to correspondence education. That is to say, we solved the problem of distribution in a very elegant way..." 6

In Kenya in 1966 the Swahili daily 'Taifa Leo' began publishing regular weekly articles and lessons in Swahili and English for new literates which occupied the two centre pages of the newspaper. The material was prepared by the Unesco Sub-Regional Literacy Centre in Nairobi, supported by various Government Ministries. After some discussions the Managing Director of East African Newspapers (Nation Series) agreed to try out the scheme, relying on increased circulation to cover the extra printing costs. His confidence proved to be fully justified. 7

Here, then, we find new support from within the ranks of journalism itself. What is to be thought of these editors who cut across the tradititional attitudes? Are they merely professional renegades?

Daniel Nelson, Editor of the Uganda "People" which published the Correspondence Education Supplement, is unequivocal on the matter:

"For newspapers to pontificate about the need for education, and the desirability of utilising the mass media for the purpose, while at the same time excepting themselves, is hypocritical. The usual attitude is: 'Use newspapers for education? Why? — that is not our job'.

But the question should be: 'Why not?'

They are cheap and therefore within range of thousands of people, and they possess one great advantage over radio — they provide a permanent record which can be retained and referred to over and over again.

"The People" started producing an education supplement because we felt that we should help meet the tremendous demand for education in Africa, because we were looking for new ways in which the news-

paper could take an active part in nation-building, and because we hoped that it would be a way of boosting sales, or at least introducing ourselves to a new section of the potential newspaper-buying market.

These reasons do not conflict with any canons of journalism or accepted practices of the Press and I believe that the failure of newspapers in the continent to explore possible educational functions of the press is due partly to lack of imagination, partly to laziness — an unwillingness to get involved in a project which does require planning and extra work, and at least in former British Colonial areas, partly to the continuation of British journalism's traditional anti-intellectual bias.

Basically, however, I think that the underlying reason for what will in future years be considered a shameful waste of facilities is the failure of the Press to think in terms of the needs and conditions of Africa."

From these various and conflicting attitudes of newspaper men to the question of education through the Press, and from our own experience, we may perhaps draw a few conclusions.

Clearly there are some fundamental differences in attitude here, both between journalists and educators and within the ranks of journalists themselves. Those educators who have been aware of the potential of the Press in education have been puzzled by the reluctance of the Press in general to publish direct educational material, and by the absence of reference to this potential, or any educational role of the Press, both by journalists and by fellow-educators. There seems to have been a common implicit acceptance that although newspapers are one of the mass media, they are not to be used for education as radio and television are used. Perhaps one of the underlying reasons for this is that, in Africa at least, the broadcasting media are normally publicly owned while the newspapers are still largely privately owned, and therefore deeply preoccupied with their commercial interests.

Yet in his comments Mr. Hopkinson does not emphasise these commercial interests, except perhaps where he states that a newspaper must be carefully arranged to "secure maximum interest for the maximum number of people" and "ensure that people buy and continue to buy the paper". His emphasis is definitely professional, both in matters of principle and practice, and it is on this that he bases his arguments against the insertion of direct educational material in newspapers. Even if the implication is there, he does not expressly state the editors are afraid of lowering their circulation or losing money if they print this educational material.

This professionalism is not something that can be lightly dismissed. Even if it is sometimes used as a cover for conservative attitudes, it is clearly something that should be respected, with mutual respect be-

tween educators and journalists. Thus we educators cannot expect — at least in a society where the Press works in comparative freedom — to go to an editor and say "It is your duty to print this..." This is something that educators have sometimes tended to forget, and one can sympathise with editors and other newspaper men — as with radio and television producers — who are oppressed by insensitive representatives of one or other branch of the teaching profession. Apart from the fact that they have generally not made enough effort from their side to promote education through the Press, educators have often expected editors to put in anything they happen to want published, without consideration of the nature of the medium. They think too much in terms of **using** the medium, perhaps as a handy alternative to duplicating and distributing thousands of sheets of foolscap. The emphasis must surely be on **co-operation** between educators and journalists, using the skills of both to the best advantage, rather than on thinking of one merely as the provider of material, and the other as the vehicle for its dissemination. I think Mr. Hopkinson also contributes a little to this separatist attitude when he speaks, again in a professional sense, of a newspaper **serving** educators as one section of the public, rather than co-operating in a joint venture.

The approach in such a joint venture may come from either side; there is no reason, for instance, why an editor who felt the need to publish direct educational material should not get in contact with a suitable educational organisation. Or a scheme may be devised through informal discussions, as in our project and in the Kenya 'Taifa Leo' courses. How any scheme is born is of secondary importance to the principle of co-operation and mutual respect and understanding. Educators must be aware of the nature of their medium, and of the processes of journalism, just as the newspaper men must be sympathetic to what the educators are trying to get across. I think we achieved this in our own project with "The People". Certainly those of us who were involved in writing and preparing the courses came to understand much more about the problems of an editor through the regular weekly process of getting the scripts ready in time for printing.

An important aspect of this matter of mutual respect is the need for the writers of educational scripts to be sensitive to the style of the paper through which the material is being presented. This of course also applies to radio and television. An editor cannot be expected to accept material that is clearly not in accord with the general style and tone of his paper. It is not merely a matter of language level, although this is obviously important. An editor is unlikely to be willing to publish material that is directed at a small and more highly-educated group, although he may well be happy to publish material that is written below the normal language level of the rest of the paper and would thus appeal to a wider section of the population.

What is important is that, as far as is possible, the educational material should be in harmony with the rest of the paper, so that it does not stand out as something apart, even though it is on a separate sheet. Again, I think we achieved this in our supplement in 'The People'. Of course our subject-matter — Government, Economics, Communication, — fitted well with much of the normal subject-matter of the paper. The 'Communication' course, for instance, contained a section on presenting arguments through letters to the Press, and a section on reading novels while the Achebe novel 'A Man of the People' was being serialised in the main body of the paper; the 'Government' and Economics' courses, being designed specifically to give background understanding of the processes of government and economic development in the country, constantly related directly to news items, features and discussions in the rest of the paper. Such close connection would not always be possible, especially with more practical or so-called 'vocational' subjects.

Apart from the subject-matter, however, I think we were also in harmony with the general approach of the paper. 'The People' is a party newspaper, supporting the Uganda Peoples Congress, the governing party. Some people criticized us on this account, suggesting that as 'part of an 'independent' educational body we should not combine with the publication of one particular party, — even if that party is the governing party and clearly commanding majority support. Yet 'the People' has established a reputation as a lively newspaper which is by no means merely a mouthpiece for government and party policy, and which presents different viewpoints on a wide variety of current issues, thus reflecting a democratic society where free discussion is generally encouraged. There is a marked similarity between this and the approach of a university adult education department in a developing country; committed to the cause of nation-building, and believing that enthusiastic attitudes can best be stimulated by getting people to think seriously and intelligently about the problems which governments and nations have to face, and the part they themselves can play in helping to solve these problems. I believe this similarity in approach was an essential element in the success of the project.

One of the possible causes of friction between the two sides in a project of this sort is the lay-out of the material. Even if the editor agrees to set aside a certain amount of space at regular intervals in the body of his newspaper, he obviously cannot guarantee how that space will be arranged. Thus it may happen that the material has to be broken up in a way that will be unpleasing to the educator.

For this reason a special pull-out supplement is probably the best arrangement, so that the educational material does not have to compete for space with the other contents of the paper. It is separate, and

yet still part of the paper. Of course this increases the overall cost, which creates another problem; if this cannot be covered immediately by increased circulation and revenue from advertising, the best solution is to find some organisation which is willing to sponsor the project, at least in its initial stages until increased revenue can take care of the extra cost of publication.

Now that the success of such a project has been demonstrated we may hope that other countries will follow suit. There is surely no reason why many other countries in Africa, and indeed other parts of the world, should not undertake similar schemes. In most countries there should be at least one paper that would be willing to publish regular articles within the main body of the paper. In some publish regular artcles within the main body of the paper. In some cases it might be possible to arrange for more than one paper to take part in an educational campaign, as happened in Algeria; one paper might carry the main teaching material, while others publish articles and features which support and supplement the main text of the course. In an ideal situation, where everyone was willing to co-operate, educators and editors could sit together and plan out in detail an extensive project, perhaps bringing in representatives of radio and television for additional support.

The development of education through the Press would be helped enormously, however, if there could be people with dual interests and skills to act as a bridge between the two professions. Speaking at a recent conference in Kampala on the need for people with special skills to write in the Press for new literates, Norman Hart concluded that "this special kind of newspaper does require a special kind of journalist, one who understands the problems of illiteracy better than the rest of us. Africa has not discovered many of them yet; and our schools of journalism aren't training them." [8]

This holds true for all educational writing. We are used to the idea of educational broadcasters working for radio and T.V., often attached to Ministries and Institutes of Education. Again we may ask, why not educational journalists for newspapers? Is there any reason, for instance, why training courses should not be arranged at a school of journalism for people who are already experienced teachers? With this, and with changing attitudes to the role of the Press in education, we could hope for some remarkable developments in the use of this most effective of all the mass media.

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